

Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation welcomes you to the
**11TH ANNUAL PARKS AND FORESTS
AWARDS BANQUET**

**Wednesday
May 10, 2017**

**RECOGNIZING EXEMPLARY WORK
TO CONSERVE AND ENHANCE OUR
STATE PARK AND FOREST SYSTEM**



Photo by Bev Martin, Tioga State Forest

Parks and Forests Awards Banquet

PPFF's mission is to inspire stewardship of Pennsylvania's state parks and forests through public engagement in volunteerism, education, and recreation.

PPFF established the awards program to recognize the outstanding service, programs, and exemplary work done by both volunteers and staff at state parks and forests.

2017 Award Winners

Cliff Jones Keystone Legacy Award: Paul Felton

Joseph E. Ibberson Government Award: Maryann Haladay-Bierly

President's Award: The Graffiti Busters

Park of the Year: Shawnee State Park

Forest of the Year: Weiser State Forest

Volunteerism Award: Friends of White Clay Creek Preserve

Education Award: Friends of Mount Pisgah

Improvement Award: Boy Scout Troop 345

Young Volunteer Award: Katie Gustafson

Program

Wednesday, May 10, 2017

Reception/Cash bar – 5:30 p.m.

Silent Auction to support removing barriers
to outdoor recreation

Welcome – 6:30 p.m.

Presentation of citations

Guest Speakers

Cynthia Dunn – Secretary,
Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Maria Montero – Chairwoman, PPF

Invocation

Dinner

Awards Presentation – 7:30 p.m.

Silent Auction Closes

Emcee

Jack Korpela – Reporter, WGAL

Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation

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Awards

Burl Bowls created by Robert H. Gochnauer Wood Turning,
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Trophy bases and engraving – Trophy House, Harrisburg, PA

Special thank you to Graphics and Design for the design
of the invitation and program - graphicsanddesign.net

PPFF would like to recognize their Corporate Members:
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Harrisburg Civic Club, SONS of Lake Erie
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Banquet Committee

Beth Artz, Judy Deiter, Joe Frassetta, Dr. James Grace,
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Cliff Jones Keystone Legacy Award

Sponsor: Chamber of Commerce for Greater Philadelphia

This top honor is given to a group, individual, or business and is chosen at the discretion of PPF. It recognizes an outstanding contribution to the protection and/or enhancement to the park and forest system in Pennsylvania.

This year's award goes to Paul Felton.



Many of us can point back to the point in our lives when conservation or the outdoors became a way of life, and it is no different for Paul Felton, this year's Cliff Jones Keystone Legacy Award Winner. Paul began life in Wilkes Barre, but after a thermal inversion of coal fumes occurred making many ill, Paul's father moved his family to the Poconos. Being raised in the woods fueled Paul's passion for the outdoors, and at the age of 12 Paul knew he wanted to become a forester. Paul's time as a Boy Scout also connected him to his passion for the outdoors.

Paul's father passed at an early age, so his mother supported her son's passion for the outdoors by saving \$300 so Paul could study forestry at Penn State. Here he studied under the infamous Doc Goddard, Father of Pennsylvania's park system. He graduated with honors in 1942, and has been following his dream ever since.

After stints in Virginia as a Photogrammetrical Engineer, and in Washington as Timber Management Forester, Paul returned to Pennsylvania, where he worked in both industry and the Pennsylvania Department of Forests and Waters (now DCNR), where he served as both assistant district forester and district forester in the William Penn Forest District, then Valley Forge Forest District. He then transitioned to the Division of State Parks, where he worked to trouble shoot issues and develop new parks under his former Professor, Doc Goddard.



In 1959, Paul left employment with the state to serve as Executive Director of the Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association, the first to hold this status. He later served as the Technical Director of the Water Resources Association of the Delaware Valley Basin, and when these organizations merged, he served as the executive director until 1980.



Retirement doesn't mean slowing down. At the age of sixty, Paul became a consulting forester and natural resources consultant, a position he held for over 12 years. Upon formal retirement, he went on to serve as Chairmen of the Meadowood Woods and Trails Committee and Field Liaison for Wellness Walks at Meadowoods, the senior living community that he now calls home. At age 96, he not only wrote the timber management plan for Meadowood, he led residents in an effort to successfully plant over 600 trees around the property!

Paul's work included many years of participation in a variety of professional, religious, and fraternal organizations, including the Society of American Foresters, the American Forestry Association, Pennsylvania Forestry Association, American Water Resources Association, and the Mid-Atlantic Council of Watershed Associations, and leadership. He's published numerous professional articles and served as editor and associate editor of a variety of professional publications.

When not leading hikes for residents at his Senior Living Community, Paul can be found making hiking sticks, overseeing tree plantings, working out in the gym, or sharing stories of a life well lived.

The Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation applauds Paul's lifelong commitment to conservation and forestry. From photo ops as a Boy Scout with President Herbert Hoover to leading nature walks with his neighbors, Paul embodies commitment to our planet. We are pleased to be able to recognize him as the Cliff Jones Keystone Legacy Award Winner.

Joseph Ibberson Government Award

Sponsor: AFSCME

This award is given to a person or department at any level of government to recognize their work in the stewardship of Pennsylvania's state park and state forest systems.

This year's award goes to Maryann Haladay-Bierly.



An online position description says that “an environmental educator inspires and informs youth of all ages about the wonders of the natural world.” Since 1982 (as a seasonal educator at Shikellamy State Park) through 27 more years at R.B. Winter State Park, Maryann Haladay-Bierly has been inspiring and informing the public, including her fellow educators, through widely diverse programming, mentoring, and fun.

At the park's Halfway Run Environmental Learning Center, her creativity has produced countless ever-changing hands-on displays creating a cozy atmosphere that brings visitors back weekend after weekend. Her knowledge of the natural world has led to the placement of many wildlife viewing stations outside the center.

With education always at the forefront of her efforts, homeschoolers and brick-and-mortar school groups alike have found Maryann's springtime Field Learning Experiences to be science with purpose and joy, with more than 2000 students each year attending field trips to R.B. Winter. Her DiscoverE Camps are always well attended with a loyal group of kids working their way through the different age group ranks. Regional Adventure Camps at Little Pine State Park guide young adults into a connection to the outdoors, and hundreds of teachers received their introduction to the Bureau of State Parks' Watershed Education program through Maryann.



On top of all her interpretive programming during the year, Maryann still found the time to organize and plan special events at R.B. Winter State Park.



Over 1300 people attended the 2016 SnowFest with an assortment of Get Outdoors PA programs being offered as well as a 5K race. Her seventh Summer Fest was held in 2016 with Get Outdoors PA programs that included kayaking and mountain biking.

Maryann has also fostered great environmental stewardship through volunteer efforts and she understands the need for teamwork among the parks in the R.B. Winter region, bringing assistance from other park staff and volunteers to help the festivals and fun. When summer at R.B. Winter draws to a close, Maryann returns the favor to her neighboring parks through assistance to other park programming with hundreds of visitors taking home the hand-dipped candles, crafty bats, or corn husk dolls she helps them create.

Jill Miller of Turbotville read in the PPF newsletter that Maryann had been named the recipient of this award and spoke for many of Maryann's many fans when she wrote to say: "I have grown up camping, swimming and hiking, at R.B. Winter State Park (or Halfway Dam, as we know it) since I was a baby. Now my children are enjoying this beautiful park. Not only that, but we are a homeschooling family and have enjoyed the many wonderful, interesting, fun, and educational programs that Maryann Halliday-Bierly has organized. We are so excited for her! Her award is well-deserved!"

Maryann's retirement next month will leave a void that will be hard to fill. We wish her all the best through many happy years of travel, volunteering, and doting grandmotherhood.

President's Award

Sponsor: H&K Group

This award is designed to recognize outstanding citizens or businesses that have made an impact in protecting open space, conservation, outdoor recreation, or volunteerism.

This year's award goes to The Graffiti Busters.



As the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation (PPFF) kicked off their Stewards of Penn's Woods program, they identified Hammonds Rocks, in the Michaux State Forest, as the location for a kick-off event. Strewn with broken glass and covered in graffiti, Hammonds offered both a challenge and a potential opportunity to raise visibility about the important role we all play in stewarding our public lands. Being the largest of 37 graffiti hotspots in our state parks and forests, it presented 6,500 square feet of graffiti.

While removing the graffiti was a PPFF initiative, the true heroes of this story are the many partners and volunteers who took it from idea to reality, with more than 530 hours of volunteer time dedicated to restoring these 500 million year old rocks. Faculty and staff from Shippensburg University Geography Earth Science Department provided research, created maps, and calculated surface areas, as well as attended volunteer days. Members of the Michaux Cabin Owners Association assisted in planning the event, cleaning the rocks, and providing for long-term stewardship. The Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park planned, recruited, interpreted, and attended all work days, including special days to remove new tags. Members of the Mount Holly Springs Citizens Fire Co #1, Penn Township Fire Company, and Yellow Breeches EMS provided water and safety during stewardship days, and were even seen with their sleeves rolled up assisting in the graffiti removal.





Michaux State Forest staff not only were instrumental in the planning, but also provided water, safety, and expertise, and remain vigilant in monitoring and apprehending vandals. The South Central Pennsylvania Climbers provided much-needed high level rope work, to remove graffiti above the ground.

A core group of about 10-15 volunteers attended five to six workdays, some on days that reached over 100 degrees! These work days became important enough for some to change their social plans and work schedules in order to be there. The work is challenging. Volunteers have to balance on rocks while applying the cleaning agents then scrubbing and spraying gallons of water on the rocks. Making the job tougher, these dedicated workers were battling heat, insects, and (for some) fear of snakes to get the job done.

The volunteers took ownership of the project, helping to build a cadre of supplies. Airgas, Chambersburg Branch, provided gloves, safety glasses, and wire brushes. This joined supplies provided by Ritters True Value Hardware, Sherwin Williams, Home Depot, and private donors. H&K Group assisted with glass removal. Weis Markets, Wegmans, Karns, Philadelphia Pretzel Factory, and the Cumberland Valley Visitors Bureau provided lunch and snacks for volunteer days. Service First Restoration provided potable water, while Eddie Bauer provided discount coupons to all participants during one volunteer day.

Today the efforts are working. There has been very little new graffiti, no new fire rings, and less trash. The area feels safe and family friendly again thanks to the Graffiti Busters.

Park of the Year Award

Sponsor: Recreation Equipment Incorporated (REI)

This award is designed to recognize a park for their exemplary or innovative work in any or all of the following: customer service, education, programming, or recreation, stewardship of assets, and accommodation of special needs visitors.

This year's award goes to Shawnee State Park.



Shawnee State Park is the dream park package: a beautiful lake, rolling hills, numerous amenities, and programs galore, as well as an enthusiastic, innovative, knowledgeable, and caring park staff.

Shawnee park staff concentrates on maintaining the beauty and wellness of their park. They have established strong relationships with local volunteer groups and continually invite new volunteers for projects. Each year, they partner with Keep Bedford County Beautiful and REI to host an annual Earth Day Cleanup. Shawnee has also partnered with many local scout groups. In 2016, the New Paris Cub Scout Pack 4042 built bird boxes that were later installed near the park office and campground entrance. The Bedford Webelos Troop 4481 helped with general campground cleanup and ended their day with a scenic hike in the park.

Maintenance staff at Shawnee has worked to accommodate visitor needs in several areas. They installed a new heated flush CXT toilet along the Lakeshore trail, renovated the mooring rails at the Colvin and Day Use Boat Launches to improve access to the lake, and added fifteen full hookup campsites. Additionally an ADA accessible amphitheater was built to host events throughout the year.



While Shawnee takes exemplary care of the needs of visitors and the park itself, they also excel in educational programming and recreation. Park staff has strived to extend the variety of activities and programs for visitors, as well as broaden their outreach to increase awareness of the natural resources and recreational opportunities that lie within Shawnee State Park

The Friends of Shawnee organize several very successful events at Shawnee Park. Each year they host two fishing derbies, Fireworks on the Lake, Arts in the Park, and numerous educational events, group hikes, and paddling trips.

Shawnee is the host site of the annual "Bedford County Outdoor Challenge," organized by the Bedford County Chamber of Commerce. The challenge is a three day event consisting of kayaking, a bike ride through rural Bedford County, and a run/walk to finish. This event has brought many local and new visitors to Shawnee.

It is clear that Shawnee State Park has an ideal landscape, phenomenal staff, and an exceptional relationship with the community. It's one of the first places that come to mind when many local people think of outdoor recreation.

Forest of the Year Award

Sponsor: Dominion Energy

This award is designed to recognize a forest district for its exemplary and innovative work in both forest management and recreation.

This year's award goes to Weiser State Forest.



Named for frontier diplomat Conrad Weiser, the Weiser State Forest covers almost 30,000 acres on 16 tracts in the heart of Pennsylvania's ridge and valley region. The Forest District includes seven counties and a series of Susquehanna River islands called the Sheets Island Archipelago.



The staff of the Weiser has placed an active emphasis on the connection between visitor access and improving habitat conditions in this large and busy forest.

For example, a key improvement to recreation began in 2003, when the Bureau of Forestry joined the Richard King Mellon Foundation and the Conservation Fund to purchase 9,000 acres from the former Pennsylvania Consumers Water Company. This beautiful mountain valley, known as Roaring Creek, contained several reservoirs that provided drinking water to 60,000 residents in Mt. Carmel and nearby towns. The primary goal of providing clean drinking water remained, while adding improved habitat and recreation opportunities.



A main attraction in the valley is the Roaring Creek Trail. This eight-mile long, non-motorized trail runs the length of the valley and, to protect water quality, is closed to motorized vehicles, with the exception of one day during late October when thousands of visitors take part in the Roaring Creek Drive Through where staff and the public have a chance to

connect. During the rest of the year, the trail is heavily used for walking, running, hiking, bicycling, cross-country skiing, fishing, hunting, and many other activities, including the Hellbender Half Marathon and 5k each spring.

The Haldeman Tract is the home of the Friends of Weiser, a PPF Chapter, and contains an extensive shared use trail system with camping sites (including an equine camp) and two picnic areas. This tract also offers deer hunting, hang gliding, trout fishing, and beautiful scenic roads. Several equine and mountain bike races occur annually at Haldeman.

In addition to traditional State Forest lands, Weiser staff also manages over 500 islands in the Susquehanna that are part of a popular water trail. An inventory of the islands is underway, and the Susquehanna River Trails Association and volunteers have joined with staff to maintain campsites on numerous islands on the river.

Along with recreation, improving habitat is a priority in the Weiser. Traditional timber harvests, prescribed fire, and hard work by the staff creates and improves various habitats such as in the Greenland Tract, where the harvesting of non-native tree species and replacement of those species with natives will result in a blended mosaic of early successional landscape benefiting many different wildlife species, improve overall species diversity, and improve the health and resiliency of the forest.

Environmental education, like that available through the new Resource Management Center in Aristes, and partnerships are likewise important to the Weiser. Along with those above, the PA Game Commission, the Ruffed Grouse Society, the Central Susquehanna Woodland Owners Association and Dauphin County Woodland Owners Association, and the Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission have joined on various projects multiplying the impact of the staff and appreciation for the Weiser.

Volunteer Awards

Sponsor: Saul Ewing

Volunteerism Award

This award is designed to recognize groups of volunteers that actively engage in a wide range of projects, the group that logged significant numbers of hours in a park or forest, or the group that has developed an innovative volunteer program.

This year's award goes to the Friends of White Clay Creek Preserve.



The Friends of White Clay Creek Preserve became a chapter of the Foundation in 2012. In their first year they organized nature programs, performed two park clean-up and dump site removal events, and started the planning of a very special new 4-mile trail, and in June of 2015 they dedicated the Tri-State Marker Trail, a project of perseverance, partnerships, and vision.

The trail takes the visitor to the site of the first pin laid by Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon at the start of their famous survey of the border between Pennsylvania, Maryland, and (then) Virginia.

Previously accessed through a series of social trails that had negative impacts on habitat, the marker remained unknown to many. Working closely with the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, the Friends identified the best route for the trail, then went about the task of raising needed revenue for the tools and materials to both construct and maintain the trail. Partnering with trail clubs, scout groups, and two other states, the work involved building a series of footbridges to protect wet areas, trail building, trail marking, and map making. Sixty-four volunteers invested over 2,600 hours to complete the trail.



With one trail under their belt, the Friends recently proposed a new nine mile trail system for the Big Elk Creek section of the White Clay Creek Preserve. Again, this will take many volunteer hours over the next several years to upgrade existing trails and build new ones, providing better access to the park.

The friends group hosts events to attract visitors to the park, such as Historic Haunting. This popular Halloween event attracts 250-300 visitors to tour the graveyard at the Preserve. Volunteer reenactors share the lives of the people buried there. A History

Committee has been formed to record and organize the history collected on those buried in the graveyard.

The Friends of White Clay Creek Preserve recently voted to repair an historic wall around the London Tract Meetinghouse. Not only will they cost share the expense with DCNR, they plan to apprentice with the contractor to learn how they can better maintain the wall in the future.

Volunteer Awards

Sponsor: Buchanan Ingersoll and Rooney PC

Education Award

The winner of this award provides ongoing educational support or programming, provides a stewardship message through events and programs, and/or organizes events that support the park and/or the gateway communities.

This year's award goes to Friends of Mount Pisgah.



The Friends of Mt. Pisgah State Park are ready, willing and able volunteers when the siren calls for assistance for anything from park programs to investment in improvements in the park. A few examples of annual events in which they assist or host include Sugar on Snow, Chief Wetona Challenge, Square Dance, Women in the Wilds, Bradford County Youth Field Day, Patriots in the Park, and Apple Butter Day.

Hundreds of people flock to this remote park in Bradford County to participate in these events, offering visitors an opportunity to try different foods, ride in a horse drawn wagon, locate geocaches with handheld GPS, engage in nature crafts, and enjoy live bands. Some events celebrate the farming heritage of the area, while others celebrate our veterans, while others develop conservation and outdoor recreation skills through hands on conservation, education, and recreation stations for kids and adults.



The friends recognize the need to invest in projects that support education, as well. Recent projects include upgrading the Nature Center with new LED lights, tile flooring, taxidermy & pelts, environmental education supplies, blinds, stereo system, shelving and furniture. They recently built an amphitheater near the Nature Center, complete with hand-hewn benches. A pavilion near the playground (purchased by the friends), aptly sports the name Friends Pavilion. Future projects include a fence for the park cemetery, new bathrooms, and an outdoor adventure playground.

From serving local foods to providing compostable products and encouraging wise use of our resources, the educational events are packed full of hands-on experiences for all ages to enjoy. These exemplary events are well-organized, staffed, and respected with the community. The Friends of Mt. Pisgah are always willing to lend a hand to better Mount Pisgah State Park and local communities.

Volunteer Awards

Sponsor: Latino Connection

Improvement Award

This award goes to an individual or a group who has completed capital improvement projects that benefited the park or forest and/or users, provided ongoing maintenance or improvements to trails, buildings, etc. or innovatively protected the natural or cultural heritage of the park or forest.

This year's award goes to Boy Scout Troop 345.



Early in 2016, a long-time member of the Friends of Keystone State Park left the group. His departure was difficult enough; even worse was the loss of his knowledge of some tasks he routinely performed for Keystone State Park. One of those tasks was the annual replacement of 20 park picnic tables. The group scheduled a work day to get as many of the tables assembled as possible. With each table weighing in excess of 200 pounds and requiring some heavy lifting and assembly skill, they hoped to get five or six tables done.

Much to the Friends Group's surprise and delight, Boy Scout Troop 345, ages 11-17, gave up their camping activities that morning to give assistance to the group. The Scouts didn't just step in; once they were shown how to assemble a table, they simply took over the process. The way the troop took to the task, it looked as though Ford had opened a new assembly plant. The boys surpassed the hope of getting five or six tables assembled in a three hour period by putting together 15 tables!



After the work was completed, Troop 345 offered to help again. During their spring campout this year, Troop 345 will put the last five tables together. Additionally, they have offered to assist every year with the efforts to replace aging tables throughout the park.

In truth, Troop 345 has been helping at Keystone State Park for the past several years. The

boys participate in a spring clean-up of the campsites. They remove downed branches and leaf cover to get the sites ready for the season. Each May the troop serves s'mores or mountain pies at Family Day. This past year they helped out by planting 500 saplings in the park.

Their actions show great dedication to the cause of volunteerism and park improvement at Keystone State Park.

Volunteer Awards

Sponsor: AT&T

Young Volunteer Award

This award recognizes a significant contribution to a park or forest by a person under the age of 25. The contribution could be in volunteer hours, a significant project, an innovative idea or more.

This year's award goes to Katie Gustafson.



Katie Gustafson, an eager 20 year old, is a Park and Resource Management major from Slippery Rock University. During the summer of 2016, Katie set out to reroute two sections of the Adam's Run trail in Chapman State Park. The reroute, totaling more than 400 feet, was needed to lead hikers away from muck and washed out trail.

Katie scouted, GPSed, and mapped the proposed reroutes. She ran PA Natural Diversity Inventory surveys and replaced or installed new culverts. Katie developed new trail segments, applied several tons of gravel, and removed old



segments, all by hand. She worked diligently and independently throughout the summer, volunteering over 120 hours. During this time, Katie also continued a full time job with a local landscaping company.

Katie's improvements to this trail were desperately needed and will provide a long term improvement to the area. This section of trail had been overlooked for several years, but has now been restored for all users to enjoy.

When Katie is not busy, you will definitely find her outdoors. She loves to kayak, fish, hike, and ride her ATV with family and friends. Her passion for outdoor recreation brought her to pursue a degree in Park and Resource Management. Her intelligence, determination, and independence are admirable and will benefit her immensely in her future career.

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Reception Sponsor



Forest of the Year Award



Cliff Jones Keystone Legacy Award



Volunteerism Award



Joseph Ibberson Government Award



Education Award



Improvement Award



President's Award



Young Volunteer Award



Park of the Year Award



Program Design



*Creating a Legacy of Stewardship
for our Public Lands*

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